

**MINUTES
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
NOVEMBER 19, 2008**

ATTENDANCE: Charles Goodyear, Acting Chairman; Andy Hunter; Vin Burke; Susan Daly; Mary Ann Gutierrez; Robert Marchesi; Susan Graham (7:40).

STAFF: Sue Swiatek, Director; James Coghlan, Assistant Director.

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by the Acting Chairman.

APPROVE MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING OF OCTOBER 22, 2008

- ** MR. MARCHESI MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS SUBMITTED.**
- ** MR. HUNTER SECONDED.**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**DISCUSS AND TAKE ACTION ON WEED BEACH BUILDING COMMITTEE
MEMBERSHIP; RETAIN PETER HOVELL ON COMMITTEE**

Mr. Burke said being on a building committee is a thankless job and even more thankless to be the chairman, such as Mr. Hovell. It is very important to have the learning curve continue upward. Mr. Hovell has done a very good job. It would be a setback to form a new committee, let alone have a new chair. It was a very positive move to bring on a CM. Apapa John has brought knowledge to this effort. Mr. Hovell has done a fabulous job. Staying on as chairman would get this plan moving again.

Mr. Marchesi said he agreed with Mr. Burke.

Ms. Daly said they had a new member on this committee, Courtney Darby. They need to increase the committee by one member.

Mr. Hovell said he would be delighted to serve. The Board of Finance has said they would prefer that he be their representative to this committee.

At 7:40 p.m., Ms. Graham arrived at the meeting.

The Acting Chairman said they should increase the size of this committee by one and ask Mr. Hovell to stay on as chairman. He said that this Commission discussed the makeup of the building committee and reaffirmed its strong support for the current membership, including the chairman.

REPORTS

WEED BEACH BUILDING COMMITTEE

Mr. Hovell said that the Playground by the Sound group has presented to the Selectmen and the Board of Finance and has been approved by both bodies. He asked the RTM to put this on their agenda, but they would prefer not to do so. He will work with Kate Busch to see if they have to accept it. If so, it will be on the RTM agenda. The money has been appropriated. The playground has been ordered for delivery in December.

Mr. Hovell said he has been asked by the RTM to make a report on the Weed Beach Building Committee at their State of the Town meeting.

Mr. Hovell said that the Garden Club had a wonderful garden show and raised \$41,000-\$42,000 for plantings.

Mr. Hovell said that the architect has been meeting with the project manager and the structural engineer, and they are working out how to do the roof line, the stone front and the piers. He is pretty sure they will have this information on December 3rd at the Building Committee meeting. They are keeping the footprint of the building the same.

Mr. Burke urged that the paddle hut and the boat ramp house be marked so that people know it is there. There should be kayak racks. The more they can reclaim beach rather than asphalt, the better off they will be. Mr. Hovell said that is this commission's decision. Ms. Swiatek said it is only a matter of signage.

PLAYGROUND BY THE SOUND

Mr. Hovell said they are moving ahead to do this in the spring. They may be doing some things near the sailing building as a safety issue.

REVIEW OF OPERATING, CAPITAL BUDGETS AND REVENUE FOR FISCAL 2010

OPERATING BUDGET:

Ms. Swiatek reviewed the budget format. She will e-mail information to commissioners. She is not looking to introduce any new positions or programs. She is looking to keep the budget status quo.

CAPITAL BUDGET:

Ms. Swiatek reviewed the capital budget and discussion took place. It was agreed to stay with the budget for Weed Beach, move out \$25,000 for Pear Tree Point Beach, the Diller property money will stay in, Holohan Field will be put off a year and capital equipment will stay as is.

REVENUE:

Ms. Swiatek reviewed the fee structure. It was agreed to keep the fees the same.

- ** MRS. DALY MOVED TO MAINTAIN THE 2007-08 FEES.**
- ** MRS. GUTIERREZ SECONDED.**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

DISCUSS PARK PERMITTING PROCESS FOR PLAY FIELDS

Ms. Swiatek reviewed Addendum #4. The issue is when a field is permitted but not used and another group uses it instead. The Darien Youth Soccer Association wants their fields to be policed.

At 8:50 p.m., Mrs. Gutierrez left the meeting.

There was consensus that the police would not be involved and signs would not be installed. The Association is free to spend their money but that does not give them special privileges. The head of the Association will be asked to attend next month's meeting.

Mr. Burke recommended best use of each field should be identified in the future. Ms. Swiatek, however, said she did not want to be pigeon-holed.

Mrs. Branigan and Mrs. Daly are on the permitting committee. The Acting Chair suggested that they discuss Mr. Burke's recommendation.

DISCUSS AND TAKE ACTION ON MEETING SCHEDULE FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2009

The February meeting will be held on February 11th.

REPORTS (CONT'D)

DIRECTOR

Ms. Swiatek reviewed her written report.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Mr. Coghlan reviewed his report. He added that at the first paddle tennis court at Weed Beach, two of the steel braces buckled. A temporary fix will cost approximately \$500. A permanent fix, to replace the main girder, is approximately \$4,200, which would require a special appropriation. This is an emergency repair. Everyone agreed that the permanent repair should be done.

- ** MR. MARCHESI MOVED TO REQUEST A SPECIAL APPROPRIATION FOR THE PERMANENT REPAIR TO THE PADDLE TENNIS COURT AT WEED BEACH.**
- ** MRS. GRAHAM SECONDED.**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

CHAIRMAN

There was no report.

PLAYGROUND BY THE SOUND (CONT'D)

Mrs. Daly said they raised \$25,000 at their cocktail party. Equipment has been ordered. They have raised almost \$240,000, minus the money for the bricks.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Acting Chairman raised the issue of the letter regarding the dogs in Woodland Park. This will be discussed at the December meeting. Ms. Swiatek said that she sent the letter to the Friends of Woodland Park and the animal control officer for their feedback.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

- ** MRS. DALY MOVED TO ADJOURN.**
- ** MRS. GRAHAM SECONDED.**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl Telesco
Telesco Secretarial Services